



CHURCH OF ENGLAND
ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
EDUCATION DIVISION



The **Methodist Church** 

National Society Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools Report

Donnington Wood CE Voluntary Controlled Junior School

Leonard Close
Winifred's Drive
Telford
TF2 8BH

Previous SIAMS grade: Outstanding

Current inspection grade: Outstanding

Diocese: Lichfield

Local authority: Telford and Wrekin

Dates of inspection: 10 March 2016

Date of last inspection: 30 March 2011

School's unique reference number 123473

Headteacher: Sandra Osman

Inspector's name and number: Helen Gilbert 633

School context

Donnington Wood is a smaller than average sized junior school serving the Donnington area of Telford. The majority of pupils transfer to Year 3 from the local infant school. Pupils come from a range of heritage groups with the largest percentage being White British. A higher than average proportion of pupils is eligible for support through the pupil premium grant. This is additional funding to support pupils eligible for free school meals, or whose parents serve in the armed forces. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs or disability who are entitled to additional support is above average. The school has very strong links with local clergy and the parish church of St Matthew's.

The distinctiveness and effectiveness of Donnington Wood as a Church of England school are outstanding

- The outstanding Christian vision and commitment of the head teacher that has inspired staff and pupils, raised aspirations and secured sustained school improvement.
- Every aspect of the school's work that is built on a firm Christian foundation and Christian values that are articulated by pupils and respected by parents.
- Staff who know their pupils very well indeed are committed to nurturing them as children of God and removing any barriers to achievement.
- Outstanding worship that ensures the spiritual development of pupils of all backgrounds.

Areas to improve

- Enhance pupil's recall of Bible stories and their significance in worship through greater interactivity, by involving pupils more in planning and leading worship.
- Enable pupils to link the school's values to stories from the Old and New Testaments.
- Work with the feeder infant school to ensure that, as part of the induction process, Year 2 pupils are introduced to the distinctive Christian character of Donnington Wood.
- Forge proactive partnership links with Holy Trinity Academy, the newly established joint Catholic - Anglican secondary school in Telford.

The school, through its distinctive Christian character, is outstanding at meeting the needs of all learners

The school's mission statement clearly articulates the Christian foundation that determines all that the school does. This is clearly visible through high quality displays around the school as well as on the front of the prospectus and the school website. The head teacher demonstrates a passion for creating a climate where all pupils are nurtured as children of God and empowered to achieve all they are capable of. She is uncompromising in her commitment to the Christian values of trust, honesty, care, compassion, respect, forgiveness and hope. These underpin every aspect of school life and are embedded across the curriculum as well as in the spiritual garden, which provides an important space for quiet reflection. The headteacher is exceptionally well supported by the leadership team, staff, governors and clergy. Governors and clergy articulate the Christian vision for the school very well indeed. Staff model the school's Christian values and as a result pupils know that they are cared for and nurtured. Senior leaders know their pupils very well indeed, understand their barriers to learning and take effective steps to mitigate these. Parents affirm that pupils with additional needs are very well supported and are deeply appreciative of the commitment of the school in ensuring that the needs of their children are met, saying *'They listen to problems and find a way through.'* As a result, the behaviour of pupils is excellent. Children are respectful towards adults and each other and there is a very positive climate for learning. This, together with the head teacher's relentless determination to raise aspirations and hold staff to account for the quality of teaching and learning, ensures that all pupils make good or better progress. The majority of pupils transfer into Year 3 working below age-related expectations. By the end of Year 6 the majority are working at least at nationally expected levels in all subjects. In writing and mathematics more-able children are performing above national expectations. Religious education (RE) has a central place within the curriculum and is very well taught across the school. Few children enter the school with an understanding of personal faith. However, they say they enjoy RE, that it is fun and challenges them to think about faith; *'we talk to each other a lot about God in RE.'* Pupils are confident that all views and opinions are respected and honoured. They value the opportunity to learn about different faiths and traditions and believe this is important. Standards in RE are at least in line with national expectations by the time they leave the school and in many cases are better. As a result they can, by the time they reach Year 5 and 6, articulate what it means for them to be part of a church school saying that at Donnington Wood *'we pray more, worship is better, we talk about God, we are God's children and God helps us.'* There is a very strong relationship between the school and local clergy and the parish church. The school has provided sensitive pastoral support and nurture to children and families through some very difficult times. This has deepened the sense of being a community and has enhanced the spiritual development of pupils of all beliefs and none. As one child said, *'sadness made our school stronger.'*

The impact of collective worship on the school community is outstanding

Worship is central to the life and work of the school. Displays and artefacts are used to great effect to create a high quality and inspirational environment for worship in the school hall. This environment is also replicated through some outstanding worship areas within each classroom. As a result, pupils value worship as an important and integral part of each day. Pupils of all faiths and none feel included in and affirmed by worship. This creates a climate of openness and trust where all feel confident to explore their own thoughts, questions and feelings about God. Pupils say that the stories they hear and reflect upon influence the care and respect that they show to one another. The worship of God is made accessible through the use of language and material which is appropriate to children's needs. Simple Anglican liturgy is woven into worship and the welcome to worship sentence reminds pupils of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. This reinforces their understanding of the doctrine of the Trinity. Through worship, pupils are introduced to the main celebrations of the Christian year and they have a good understanding of the meaning of Christmas, Lent and Easter. They readily associate Lent with the time Jesus spent in prayer in the wilderness. They also gain an understanding of Anglican practices such as baptism and communion. Bible stories underpin the themes that are introduced through whole

school worship at the start of each week. These give pupils a good introduction to old and new testament stories although their recall of many of these is limited. This is an area for development. Prayer has a central place in the life of the school and is seen as something very natural. Pupils experience formal liturgical prayers such as the Lord's prayer in collective worship. They regularly write their own prayers in their classroom prayer books, many of which are beautifully illustrated. Some of these prayers are very poignant and demonstrate an exceptional depth of reflection and response to life's difficult issues and questions. Prayer helps pupils to make sense of their feelings about grief and loss and a significant number of children talk about praying at home. One child said, 'I pray at home, I know God will keep me safe.' The worship council has been set up this year and comprises ten pupils, democratically elected, from across the school. They meet weekly and their remit is to actively work with staff to evaluate the impact of worship. They, themselves, gather feedback from pupils' prayers and reflections in each class and this supports the work of school leaders and governors to identify areas for development.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school as a church school is outstanding

During her time at the school the head teacher has worked tirelessly to inspire staff and pupils and raise their expectations. She is exceptionally well supported by the two senior leaders who share her vision and commitment to nurturing pupils and supporting families. As a result, parents testify to the many strengths of the school and speak of 'the outstanding care and support' for children with special or additional needs. School leaders and governors are justifiably proud of the progress the school has made but there is no sense of complacency. They share a thorough understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. Governors are very well organised and highly supportive of the school and are well equipped to hold the school to account and participate at every level of the monitoring and evaluation process. The Chair is an advisory teacher within the Local Authority and shares the school's inclusive vision and the commitment to support children with additional needs, enabling them to succeed. The head teacher and governors are mindful of the need for succession planning and there is a robust programme for staff and governor development. Leaders and governors are keen to develop and enhance the transition process for pupils both from the infant school as they begin their school life, as well as moving on to secondary school. The school has strong links with local clergy who support the school well and who, in different ways, enhance the Christian character of the school. Links with the parish church are very strong. Supporting the school is an objective in the parish's mission action plan, and the congregation pray regularly for the school. For many families the church can be a place of sanctuary during difficult times. There are also strong links with the diocese. Worship and RE are very well led and managed. The RE Co-ordinator is part of the diocesan working group and this enables her to moderate standards and share best practice with colleagues. Pupils develop their own leadership skills through a number of positions of responsibility such as librarians, buddies, rainbow leaders, house captains, worship council and school council. Members of the school council are articulate and confident that they make a significant contribution to the life of the school. They cite safety in school, addressing bullying, the creation of the memorial garden and developing the voice of pupils as examples of their influence and success. As one child said, 'We understand we are God's children, God helps us and we learn from the Bible to serve others.'

SIAMS report March 2016. Donnington Wood CE (VC) Junior School, Telford, TF2 8BH.